

Dr. Ambedkar As The Member of Executive Governor General Council Questions and Answers

PART VI

From 14th September 1942 to 12th April 1946

232

The Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : I do not propose to make the motion that stands in my name.

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Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company

419. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited, is a company incorporated outside India ? How long has this Company been operating in the Delhi Province and what is the area served by it ?

(b) How many units of electricity did this Company use for traction purposes, how many units did it sell to consumers in its area of supply during the past twelve months or so, how many units out of its total supply did it generate from its own power station, and how many units did the Company buy from the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited ?

(c) Is it a fact that the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited has not increased the supply of current from its generating station to any considerable extent for a number of years, and has been for some time, for all practical purposes, dependent upon the Government power station at present under the control of the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited ?

(d) Is it a fact that the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited is a company sponsored by Government and works on a no-profit basis ?

(e) What is the price that the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited pays per unit of electricity supplied by the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited, and what are the different rates at which the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited sells electricity to its different classes of customers ?

(f) Is it a fact that the Government have an option to purchase the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited in February, 1947, when their present licence expires, provided a notice is served on the Company in February 1945 ? If so, has the question of exercising the option been considered as yet, and with what result ?

(g) What is the amount that the Government will have to pay in case they decide to purchase this undertaking, and to what extent will the purchase

enable the Government to utilise the sterling balance held to the credit of India in England ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes. The Company's licence runs from the 2nd March 1905: The area of supply now includes;

(i) the whole of the area in the jurisdiction of the Delhi Municipal Committee;

(ii) the whole of the Delhi Civil Station Notified Area; (iii) the whole of the West Delhi Notified Area; and (iv) a tract of land in the jurisdiction of the Delhi District Board. (b) During war-time it is not in the public interest to supply the information.

(c) Yes. The Company's generating plant is now used more or less as a stand-by.

(d) Yes.

(e) A statement is laid on the table.

(f) Yes. The question is now under the consideration of the Chief Commissioner, Delhi.

(g) Under the first proviso to sub-section (1) of section 7 of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, the price to be paid for the property of the licence, if the option of purchasing were exercised, would be its fair market value at the time of purchase or determined by arbitration. It is not possible to answer the second half of the question till the amount likely to be involved is known.

STATEMENT

The Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Co. Ltd., are charged at 69 anna per unit of electricity supplied in bulk by the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited.

Rates charged by the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Co. Ltd. Lighting and fans—Three annas per unit less 3 pies discount per unit for prompt payment of bills.

Domestic power, (Cooling, water heating, refrigerators, radiators and air conditioning)—One anna per unit nett.

Battery charging—Two annas per unit less ten per cent discount for prompt payment of bills.

Industrial—

A Consumer with connected load up to 75 K.V.A. Restricted hour supply—1.1 anna per unit less a discount of .1 anna per unit for prompt payment of bills.

Unrestricted hour supply—Rates as for Restricted hour supply and in addition a charge of Rs. 5 per H. P. per month less ten per cent discount for prompt payment of bills. Special rates are quoted.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : Is the Honourable Member aware that a few years ago, the Delhi Municipal Committee applied for a licence for the purpose of enabling itself to supply electricity in the area concerned or at least part of it

and that as a result of that application, an enquiry was held into the position of this company by a Committee over which perhaps Sir James Pitkathly presided or the Electrical Adviser to the Government of Bengal, presided ? Is the Honourable Member in a position to give this House an idea about the comments made by this Committee or these individuals, in regard to the affairs of this company ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If the Honourable Member will put down a specific question, I shall certainly be glad to give the information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : Has the Honourable Member tried to ascertain the total amount of profits earned by this Company ? Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to a statement in a recent article in the Hindustan Times in which it has been stated that the total profits earned by the company was already about five times its capital ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :** Yes, Sir, I have noticed.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : Is the Honourable Member in a position to say whether that is a fact or not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot say anything about that now. If the Honourable Member wants information, he will give notice of a question.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to part (b) May I know the proportion of units actually produced by this company to the units purchased by the company at cost price from the Government undertakings ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have already answered that during war time, it is not in the public interest to give the information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : I know. Is the Honourable Member in a position to deny that it is a very small proportion of the units actually distributed by this company that is produced by it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That, I am afraid, will be circumventing the provisions of the Act which prohibits me from giving the information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : I did not know that the Honourable Member was prevented even from giving the proportion. However, I give up that point. As regards the point that the matter is under consideration of the Chief Commissioner having regard to the important policy involved do Government propose to direct the Chief Commissioner in regard to coming to any particular conclusion, or do the Government of India merely propose to carry out, or rather endorse, the decision of the Chief Commissioner in this behalf?

The Honourable Dr. .B. R. Ambedkar : The Government of India themselves are considering this matter.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to part (f), having regard to the shortness of lime during which notice is to be served, if at all, will the Government come to a very quick decision in the matter ? Will the Government be pleased to take this House into their confidence at the earliest possible opportunity in regard

to this case ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I can assure my Honourable friend that Government will certainly come to its own conclusions before the time expires.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : Having regard to the fact that this Legislature is virtually in the position of a Provincial Legislature so far as Delhi Province is concerned, does the Honourable Member propose to let this House have an opportunity to consider and discuss this matter ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I shall bear the Honourable Member's suggestion in mind.

Mr. R. R. Gupta: Do the Government propose to increase the capacity of the electric power house situated in New Delhi under the Government control ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: That question does not arise. I cannot give an answer.

234

Refusal of Facilities to All-India Womens Conference for Studying the Condition of Women in Coal Mines

579. Mrs. Renuka Ray : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) if it is a fact that the All-India Women's Conference approached the Government for facilities to send an investigation Committee for an impartial studying of women in coal mines and that on the 3rd May, the Government of India informed the aforesaid organisation that there was no objection against such investigation, and the time was not suitable at present; and

(b) if it is a fact that subsequently on a request from the All-India Women's Conference on the 26th May, the Government of India again refused the facilities and informed them that Government would let them know when the lime was suitable and that upto now the All-India Women's Conference has not heard from the Government; what the causes are which led to this course of action ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) the reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The reasons were explained in the Government of India's letters to the President of the Conference.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: May I know the reasons which led the Government to pass the order referred to in part (b) ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The time was not suitable.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : What does the Government mean by saying that the time was not suitable ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I think the word ' suitable ' is a very simple word. Everybody can understand it. I do not think I can further simplify it.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : Is it a fact that the Government allowed the Regge and the Health Survey Committees to go and investigate during the same period ? Is it a fact that the All-India Women's organisation has not been given similar permission till now ? If so, what is the basis for such differentiation ? Why is it that a responsible body like the All-India Women's organisation who are interested in the welfare of women has not been allowed ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They are official bodies which were allowed.

Mrs. **Renuka Ray** : Are not the Members of the Legislature on that Committee?

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The Honourable Member is arguing.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Why are women stopped from going into the mines and investigating? Why should Government consider that the time is not suitable only in the case of Women's organisation ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Honourable Member can draw his own inference.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I ask whether it is not a fact that Government do not consider the time suitable because the conditions in the mines are so bad that they do not like investigation being made by an impartial body ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Honourable Member is at liberty to draw his own inferences.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : Next question.

235

Shortage of Labour in Coal Mines due to Malaria

580. Mrs. **Renuka Ray** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) if it is a fact that the shortage of labour in coal mines, particularly during the months of August and September was due to a large proportion of mining labour suffering from malaria and that no adequate treatment was possible due to the inadequate supply of quinine; and

(b) if the Honourable Member is aware of the fact that mining labour is suffering so acutely from the effects of diseases and malnutrition that this has seriously affected their efficiency; if so, what steps taken to remedy this are ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : (a) The coal-mining labour is not immune to the seasonal incidence of malaria, but it is not correct to say that a large proportion of this labour suffered from the disease during August and September. The incidence of the disease per thousand of the average daily labour force employed in the Jharia Coalfield was 81 and 80 for the month of August in 1943 and 1944 respectively and 111 and 74 for the month of September in 1943 and 1944 respectively. Every effort is made to provide adequate facilities for treatment and sufficient supplies of quinine and its

substitutes.

(b) It cannot be said that mining labour is suffering acutely from malnutrition. As regards their health all collieries employing 30 persons or more are required to maintain a dispensary and distribute medicines through their doctors. Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund has recently been set up from which measures for prevention of disease in the mining population and improvement of medical facilities will be financed.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : With regard to the point about malnutrition, will the Honourable Member please make a statement as to whether it is not a fact and an admitted fact that apart from the shortage of labour in collieries, individual output of work has gone down due to malnutrition ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am not certain about the facts mentioned by my Honourable friend.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : Will the Honourable Member make an enquiry from the Honourable the Supply Member, who, I understand made a statement to this effect on a recent occasion when he met one of the Chambers of Commerce.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : There is no need for an enquiry as the Honourable Member seems to be in possession of the fact.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : Will the Honourable Member convince himself about the truth of this position ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, I know there has been some fall in production, but I understood it was entirely due to the fact that there was lack of machinery.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : As the Honourable Member has told us about dispensaries in the different mines, will he kindly investigate and find out what the medical facilities are and how far the dispensaries are working and giving medicines in the mines at Ranigunj and Jharia ? My information is that some of them cannot work because there are not enough medicines.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : As I said, it was because in the opinion of Government the facilities were not sufficient that Government established the coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund.

236

Cases of Employment of Children on Underground Work in Mines

581. Mrs. Renuka Ray : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) if he is aware of the fact that there are a growing number of cases of violation of the Act prohibiting children in underground work in mines ?

(b) if the answer is in the affirmative, what the steps taken to ensure the enforcement of the Act are; and

(c) if the answer is in the negative, will the Honourable Member kindly investigate the matter and take effective steps to put a stop to any such illegal practice that may prevail ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No. (b) Does not arise.

(c) Inspections are regularly made by the Officers of the Department of Mines to enforce the provisions of the Indian Mines Act regarding the prohibition of employment of children in mines and effective steps will be taken as a matter of course if any such illegal practice prevails anywhere.

Mrs. **Renuka Ray** : Is the Honourable Member aware that there is a growing number of cases of violation in some of the mines in Jharia and Ranigunj coalfields and that children of 14 and 15 are signed up as adults and actually go down the mines ? And what does the Honourable Member propose to do about it?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If the Honourable Member has any specific cases having reference to specific mines and will bring them to my notice, I will certainly take the matter up.

237

Underground Work in Mines by Pregnant Women

582. Mrs. Renuka Ray : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) if he is aware of the fact that pregnant women usually work underground in mines until the ninth month and again a fortnight after child birth, and that in mines where maternity benefits are not given they work even longer ?

(b) the steps Government have taken to stop pregnant women from working underground;

(c) if it is a fact that there have been a certain number of accidents to women working underground within the last year and there is no way of ascertaining how many of these accidents have occurred to pregnant women; and

(d) if it is a fact that maternity benefits are given only in some mines; what steps Government intend to take to make maternity benefits compulsory for all women working in mining areas ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) I am not aware of the basis for this allegation. Under section 3 of the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, employment of a woman for a period of four weeks following her confinement is prohibited. Further a woman is entitled to leave of absence for a period of one month before she expects to be delivered of a child. Inspections under this Act are regularly made by the Labour Inspectors under the Chief Inspector of Mines, all of whom are doctors, with a view to enforcing the provisions of the Act and the rules made thereunder.

(b) As already stated, pregnant women are entitled to leave of absence for a period of one month before the date of delivery; and the object of the employment of Labour Inspectors under the Chief Inspector of Mines is to make known to these women their rights under the Act and to assist them in securing the benefits of that Act.

(c) Yes, but no information of any of these women being pregnant has

been received. During enquiries following accidents, the evidence of the colliery doctor is invariably recorded and if a woman were pregnant her condition would be disclosed and recorded.

(d) The Mines Maternity Benefit Act 1941 applies to all mines in British India except:

(i) certain stone crushing plants forming part of mines in the province of Bombay;

(ii) iron ore mines worked without mechanical power, the whole of the ore from which is supplied totally to village smelters and blacksmiths; and

(iii) those mines in which excavation is being carried out for prospecting purposes only, provided not more than 20 persons are employed in or about such excavation and subject to certain other conditions.

It is not considered necessary to make maternity benefits compulsory in these small mines.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Have there actually been any cases of pregnant women having suffered ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, there have been some. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : When ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Since they started working. These accidents are often occurring in the coal mines.

Mrs. **Renuka Ray**: Will the Honourable Member tell us whether the best way of preventing pregnant women from going down the mines would not be to restore the ban on women working underground ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I entirely agree, provided the circumstances were propitious.

238

Restoration of Ban on Women Working Underground in Coal Mines

583. Mrs. Renuka Ray : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) when the Government of India intend to restore the ban on women working underground in coal mines in view of their former promise; and

(b) how far the employment of women underground has increased coal raisings?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The Government are most anxious to re-impose the ban as soon as production of coal reaches a figure which makes possible such re-imposition.

(b) Coal raisings have increased appreciably as a result of the employment of women underground, but no exact figures can be given as other factors are in operation at the same time.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : Is the Honourable Member aware that a very infinitesimal proportion represents the increased raisings helped by women working underground and does he consider that the violation of an international code and moral convention is compensated by the increased

raisings that is due to women working in the mines even from the point of view increased production ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : My information is to the contrary.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know what is the target of production aimed at by Government in order to restore this ban ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I am unable to say.

Mrs. Renuka Ray: Is the Honourable Member aware that the woman acts as loader underground and the man as cutter, and so the rate of progress of each tub is much slower because a woman cannot act as cutter, and the result is that the man has to rest, whereas the rate would be much faster.....

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The Honourable Member is making a speech.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : I should like to know if the Labour Member does not consider that the rate of progress of the work per tub is much slower because women work as loaders and cannot work as cutters.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I am glad to have that information, but I am passing no opinion either on the reliability of the statement or the feasibility of the suggestion.

239

Post of Labour Welfare Officer for Government of India Presses

586. **Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the post of Labour Welfare Officer for the Government of India presses was advertised; if so, when and how;
- (b) whether any selection has been made;
- (c) whether it is a fact that the post was reserved for a Muslim;
- (d) the number of persons who have been appointed as Assistant Labour Welfare Officers during the last two years; and
- (e) what their academic qualifications are and how many of them are Muslims ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) One posts of Labour Welfare Officer for the Government of India Presses has been sanctioned and it was advertised by the Federal Public Service Commission in the approved newspapers in June last. Applications were due to reach the office of the Commission by the 10th July;

(b) and (c) Yes.

(d) One lady Assistant Welfare Adviser was appointed directly under Labour Department.

(e) She is M.A., M. Lilt., and is a Hindu.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are these officers appointed for the Central Government Presses or also for the Provincial Government Presses ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : For the Central Government

Presses.

240

Statistics re Private Newspaper Owners and Their Employees

600. Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall : Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) if the Government have obtained any statistics about the number of private newspaper owners and the persons employed by them; and

(b) if the answer to (a) be in the negative, do the Government propose to obtain the statistics with a view to afford relief to such employees with regard to (i) rules of leave, (ii) list of holidays, (iii) grades of salaries and (iv) dearness allowance ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) The Labour Investigation Committee is collecting general information regarding the *terms* and conditions of employees in printing presses. The question as to what additional information should be collected and as to the feasibility of legislating to govern the conditions of employees of newspaper organisations will be considered in due course.

Mr. **Kailash Bihari Lall** : May I know if Government can at least obtain the figures regarding Delhi Printing Press ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I think it would be better to wait in order to know what the Labour Investigation Committee is doing in this matter.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Delhi is a small area of which the Honourable Member can get.....

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The Honourable Member is arguing. Next question.

241

Extensions of Service in Government of India Press, Aligarh

601. Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that extension after extension in service is allowed in many cases in the Government of India Press, Aligarh

(b) whether it is a fact that every year the Manager of that Press recommends a tot of cases of extension to the Controller of Printing and Stationery in India;

(c) whether it is a fact that fully trained and qualified men are available in that Press to work in the places of these men whose extension has been recommended by the Manager and who are on the verge of retirement;

(d) whether it is a fact that the claims of some of the qualified men for the posts of these retiring hands have been blocked due to these recommendations for extension in service; and

(e) if the answers to (a) to (d) be in the affirmative, has the Honourable Member considered the advisability of issuing instructions to the effect that no further extension be granted in future under any circumstances ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b) No. Only a few cases are recommended.

(c) In some cases qualified men are available, in others not.

(d) No.

(e) Does not arise.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi : Do I understand that the answer to part (a) of the question is in the negative, and he has not been recommending any extensions whatsoever?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I said, only a few cases are recommended.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi : Has the General Manager been granting any extensions, or not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The Manager has been granting extensions.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: May I know why these extensions are granted when qualified persons are available.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am not prepared to admit that extensions are granted notwithstanding that qualified persons are available.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi : I understood the Honourable Member to say that sometimes extensions are granted even when qualified persons are available.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, in a very few cases.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: May I know the reason for which extensions are granted to people even under those circumstances ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I understand that the general reason why these extensions are granted in the cases referred to by my Honourable friend are entirely governed by the fact that some people lose their pensions if they are not given a year or two's extension.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi : Is that the only reason, or is there some other reason also ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am not aware of any other reason.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi : Will the Honourable Member be pleased to enquire whether the extensions that were given in the cases referred to were solely for this reason or for some other reason ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have made enquiries and that is the information I have.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know the names of persons included in those ' few cases ' ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no names of persons, but I

have a certain number of cases before me.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: What community do they belong to ? (No reply).

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : Next question.

242

Time Scale of Pay for Binders and Warehousemen of Government of India Press, New Delhi

602. Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to slate : (a) whether it is a fact that the Government of India has sanctioned the Time Scale of pay for which the Binders and warehousemen of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, had been representing;

(b) whether it is a fact that these people have been representing their case for this purpose for the last fifteen years approximately;

(c) whether it is a fact that some warehousemen who have been serving for the last fifteen and twenty years and whose pay is only Rs. 25 per month at present, are not benefited at all by this Time Scale of pay at present;

(d) whether it is a fact that not a single increment has been sanctioned to any man, immediately; and

(e) if the answers to (a) to (d) be in the affirmative, will the Honourable Member please consider the advisability of sanctioning at least one increment to all Binders and warehousemen just at the time of introducing the Time Scale of pay so that some immediate relief may be gained by these men who have been waiting for the last so many years ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes, for some time past.

(c) Yes, but they will be benefited as soon as they earn their next increment.

(d) Yes, because no increment has been yet earned since the 22nd June 1944 when the Time Scale came into force.

(e) No action as proposed is necessary, as the men will earn their increments next year.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi : Will the Honourable Member be pleased to consider that some persons will be on the verge of retirement and will not be able to get any benefit from this time-scale. Isn't it proper in such case for the Government to give them some increment in lieu of their past services ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not think it is prudent to alter the law in order to meet hard cases !

243

Development of Mahanadi Projects in Orissa

607. **Prof. N. G. Ranga :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be

pleased to state :

(a) if he is aware that Sir M. Visveewaraya Committee's report on Mahanadi to stop the ravages of floods in Orissa has suggested the development of Mahanadi projects and a system of irrigation canals to irrigate huge areas of land in Cuttack, Sambalpur, Puri and Balasore Districts;

(b) if such a scheme was estimated to cost about rupees four crores in 1938-39; and

(c) whether Government of India will consider the advisability of taking the initiative and developing that scheme, in view of the financial disabilities of the subvention province of Orissa and also of the great need of India for more rice production ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b) No. Information on the subject has been called for.

(c) Government cannot give such an assurance at this stage without a careful examination of the scheme.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : Is Government prepared to examine this scheme carefully?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : Will it form part of the investigations of one of the various sub-committees or the National Planning structure of committees ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot say as regards the procedure that Government should adopt. But I shall examine the thing.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Thank you.

244

Arrangements for Supply of Rice to Colliery Labour in Bihar

611. Mr. **K. C. Neogy :** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to explain in detail the arrangements that are in operation in the province of Bihar in the matter of supplying rice to colliery labour ?

(b) Has the Honourable Member received any complaint that the Bihar authorities are charging some of the collieries prices for rice to be supplied to their labour force which are higher than the control prices and that the quality of rice supplies is also bad ? If so, what are the different points raised in these complaints, and what are the ascertained facts relating thereto ?

(c) How does the system in Bihar in the matter differ from the system introduced in the Bengal collieries ?

(d) What action do Government propose to take to remove the complaints made on behalf of a section of the Bihar collieries in this matter ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Under an order issued by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dhanbad, under the Defence of India Rules dated the 20th April 1944, every colliery worker is entitled to buy from the colliery shop at prices equal to the controlled prices fixed by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, an amount of foodgrains not exceeding a total of four seers of foodgrains per week (of which not more than two seers shall be rice)

for himself and each adult dependent, and two seers (of which not more than one seer shall be rice) for each minor dependent. In addition every heavy worker is entitled to half a seer of free ration in rice for each attendance; but miners who prefer may draw the whole or some part of the free ration in other grains.

(b) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. The facts are that the Bihar Government have charged the Colliery Associations the actual cost of rice supplied up to the 1st November 1944. The bulk of these supplies originated in Nepal where the Bihar government had to purchase above their control rate. Consequently supplies of Nepal rice have been made to the Colliery Associations at approximately Rs. 1-8-0 above the total wholesale control rate. From the 1st November 1944, the Bihar Government have decided to charge the total wholesale control rate plus four annas administrative charge and to bear the resulting loss. The facts relating to the complaint regarding quality are being ascertained.

(c) In the Bengal collieries there is no rationing system but employers of more than 1,000 workers must buy their supplies of grains from the Civil Supplies Department of the Government. In Bihar every colliery is required to buy through the Rice Administrator, Indian Mining Association or the Secretary Joint Supply Pool.

(d) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the answer given to clause (b) of the question.

245

Contract for Construction of Clerks' Quarters at Todi Road, Delhi

612. **Shri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) whether the contract for the construction of clerks' quarters at Todi Road for about Rs. 28,60,000 was given to a higher tenderer instead of lower tenderer who quoted 11.25 below the schedule of rates;

(b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative what was the total excess amount the Government had to pay over the lowest tenderer;

(c) if it is a fact that the same firm was given another contract for a similar construction at the very place for about Rs. 50,00,000 at 5 per cent. above the schedule of rates, rejecting the lowest tenderer; and

(d) were the above tenders examined by the Department before they were accepted ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No. A portion of the Todi Road project was given to this firm as its tender rate was low in comparison with that of others.

(d) The tenders were examined and accepted by the Chief Engineer, Central Public Works Department who is the competent authority in such cases.

Prescribing Set Form of Receipt for Rent under Delhi Rent Control Ordinance

625. Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if the Government propose to prescribe a set form of receipt to be compulsorily granted by the landlord to the tenants under the Delhi Rent Control Ordinance, 1944 ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Government have the matter under examination.

Increase in Cost of Living in Certain Cities

100. Mr. **Badri Dutt Pande**: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) if it is a fact that the living index has shown an increase in the cost of living by 182 per cent in certain cities; if not, what the fact is;

(b) if it is a fact that the wages of Railway servants working in those cities have not been raised by 182 per cent; if not, what the correct fact is; and

(c) if the Government propose to increase the wages of the employees in those cities where the cost of living has arisen by 182 per cent accordingly; if not, why not;

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Government are aware that the published cost of living indexes have risen in some towns by 182 or more over the index of August, 1939.

(b) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. In regard to the second, Railway workers are compensated for increased cost of living by relief in cash and concessions in kind which together are considered adequate to meet the needs and are adjusted from time to time as the situation demands.

(c) The answer to the first part is in the negative. As regards the second part, the policy of Government is not to make any comprehensive revisions in scales of pay during the present unstable economic conditions but to meet increases in the cost of living either by dearness allowance or by relief in kind or by both.

Requests for Adjudication of Railway Trade Disputes

101. Mr. **Badri Dutt Pande**: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) the number of requests for adjudication of trade disputes between the Railway Administrations and its employees recorded during the preceding five years; and

(b) how those requests were disposed of?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). I place on the table a

statement showing the number of requests made for settlement of trade disputes between Railway Administrations and their employees during the past five years under the Trade Disputes Act or Rule 81A of the Defence of India Rules, and action taken on them.

249

Procedure re Appointment of Adjudicator of Trade Disputes

102. Mr. **Badri Dutt Pande**: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) the rules governing the proceedings before an adjudicator is appointed under Rule 81 of the Defence of India Act Rules;

(b) the qualifications prescribed for the appointment of an adjudicator for the trade disputes between the employer and its employees; and

Requests for Boards of Conciliation or Courts of Enquiry under the Trade Disputes Act or adjudication under Defence of India Rule 81A in connection with trade dispute between the Railway Administrations and their employees

S. No.	Year	From whom the request was received	Nature of request	Action taken
1	2	3	4	5
1	1939	Certain travelling Ticket Inspectors on the E. I. Rly.	Appointment of a Court of Enquiry under section 3 of the Trade Disputes Act to consider the propriety of withholding a memorial addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy.	Rejected (The Trade Dispute Act did not apply as the matter was not a trade dispute for the purpose of the Act).
2	1940	The employees of the G.I.P. Railway.	Appointment of a Court of Enquiry Under section 3 of the Trade Disputes Act to investigate the question of Grant of war dearness allowance.	Accepted.
3	1943	All India Railwaymen's Federation, Mylapore, Madras.	Appointment of an adjudicator Under Defence of India Rule 81A on the question of dearness allowance for Railway.	Rejected.
4	1943	The G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union, Bombay.	Do.	Do.
5	1944	The N.W.R. Employee Union, Karachi.	Do.	Do.
6	1944	G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union.	Do.	Do.
7	1944	B.B. & C.I. Railwaymen's Union, Bombay.	Do.	Under consideration of Government.

See question no.101 at Sr. No.249

(c) on whose report or request an adjudicator under Rule 81 of the

Defence of India Act Rules is to be appointed ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The Honourable Member is presumably referring to rule 81A of the Defence of India Rules. There are no rules governing the proceedings before an adjudicator.

(b) No qualifications have been prescribed and it is not possible to do so because action under Rule 81A is of an urgent nature and it is not always possible readily to obtain persons of any particular qualifications in different parts of the country. The general rule is to appoint the most suitable person available in all circumstances of the case. Persons so far appointed include High Court Judges, District and Sessions Judges, Chief Presidency Magistrates, Labour Commissioners and their Assistants, Workmen Compensation Commissioners and War Injuries Claims Officers.

(c) An adjudicator may be appointed at the request of either or both the parties, or on the initiative of Government.

250

Results of Propaganda by Indian Labour Federation

103. Mr. **Badri Dutt Pande:** Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the results achieved from the propaganda by the Federation of Labour from the subsidy of Rs. 13,000 a month ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given by me on the 7th November 1944 to part (c) of Prof. Ranga's starred question No. 152.

251

Appointment of Committee of Enquiry re Mica Industry of India

Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that a Committee of Enquiry by the Central Government regarding Mica Industry of Bihar has been appointed or is going to be appointed.

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware that a constitution of the said enquiry is beyond the jurisdiction of the Federal Legislative list ?

(c) If the reply be in the affirmative will the Honourable Member be pleased to state the reason for such encroachment upon the Provincial Legislative List as set out in the Seventh Schedule to the Government of India Act, 1935.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes, the Committee has been appointed.

(b) and (c) In appointing the Committee the Central Government proceeded on the view that no such encroachment was involved, but the Honourable Member is of course free to form his own opinion.

Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha : Will the Honourable Member please state under what section of the Government of India Act has the action been taken ?

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): Presumably

Government have acted upon their own responsibility.

252

Summary of Proceedings of the Fifth Labour Conference and the Fourth Meeting of the Standing Labour Committee

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I lay on the table a copy each of the Summary of Proceedings of the Fifth Labour Conference held at New Delhi on the 6th and 7th September 1943 and the Fourth Meeting of the Standing Labour Committee held at Lucknow on the 25th and 26th January 1944.

253

Government Contribution to Indian Labour Federation

35. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if his attention has been drawn to a contribution by the United Press, published in the Sind Observer of the

17th December, 1944, under the caption " Roy-Mchta Mud Slinging over Rs.13,000 in which Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, M.L.A., now an officer in the Government of India, has said that he has with him an official correspondence on the aforesaid subject showing that the name of the Labour Federation has been used behind the back, over the head and without the knowledge of either its President or its Executive Council and further Rs. 13,000 per month were obtained by Mr. Roy for himself to be used as he liked ?

(b) In view of the above information, will the Honourable Member be pleased to give information with regard to this public money as to whom it was given and for what purpose, and how it was used, and did Mr. Roy himself use the money as he liked, or did he make use of it for his own purposes or divide it with Mr. Jamnadas Mehta ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes, by the Honourable Member himself.

(b) I would invite attention to my reply given to the Honourable Member's question No. 31 on the 2nd November, 1944.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : The Honourable Member has not given specific replies to my questions. I want to know, with regard to part (b), whether what Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has said in that article is correct, or what the Honourable Member said last lime on this question was correct ? Is this money for Mr. Jamnadas, is it for Mr. Roy, or is it for both ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have nothing to add to the reply that I have given.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : But I want the Honourable Member to reply to my questions.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The Honourable Member has given the reply.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : I know that the Honourable Member is feeling shy over this question because if he makes a statement it would go against his

own answers. I submit that the Honourable Member should reply to my questions otherwise there will be an adjournment motion on this subject.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: I think the House has got a right to know whether it is a personal gratuity or it is for the benefit of the Federation.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is given to the Federation.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : May I know whether the Government has satisfied themselves that it has been entered in the accounts of the Federation and it has been spent through the Federation ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : May I know whether the Government are contemplating an increased amount being given ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: No.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : May I know for what period this has been sanctioned for the present ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is sanctioned for a year.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : May I know when it ends ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: When the budget ends.

Mr. Badri Dutt Pande: The Honourable Member said the other day that audited copies of accounts will be placed on the table of the House. Has he done so ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: They have not been received as yet.

Mr. **Govind V. Deshmukh** : Has the Honourable Member seen the details of this account ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I understand that they are seen by a special officer who has been appointed by Government in this behalf.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : From those accounts that the Honourable Member has seen already, is it or is it not clear that this money has been utilised by Mr. Roy for his own purposes ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I think that is not the correct statement.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : Then which is the correct statement ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It has been spent for the purposes for which it has been granted.

Mr. Badri Dutt Pande: To whom was the money handed over to Mr. Roy, to Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, or to the Secretary of the Federation ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is received by the Secretary of the Federation.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta : No money has been received by the Federation from the Government. The Name of the Federation has been used behind the back, over the head and without the knowledge of either its Executive Committee or its President. The Government have been cheated. It is without the knowledge of the Federation.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not my information.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta : Government have been cheated.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Will the Government take any action now that the Honourable Member has been told that Government has been cheated ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: Government does not believe that it has been cheated.

254

Re-Imposition of Ban on Women Working Underground in Mines

48. Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) whether the matter of continuing to allow women inside the mines has been reviewed ;

(b) how many women are now working under mines ; and (c) in view of the fact that women working underneath cannot even decently clothe themselves, whether he will consider the advisability of abolishing the practice altogether ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The question of re-imposing the ban on the underground employment of women in coal mines, to which the Honourable Member presumably refers, has been reviewed.

(b) The figure varies but at present about 15,000 to 16,000 women are employed underground in coal mines.

(c) The ban has been lifted only as a temporary measure, and will be reimposed as soon as conditions permit.

I may also add that all female workers, both surface and underground, are supplied with two saris per year at the concessional rates as arranged for by the various Mining Associations; at some mines the saris are given free and at others at half price.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : The question was not whether they get saris to wear. It is impossible for them to wear the saris in the mines and so the question of presentation of saris or giving them at concessional rates is absolutely irrelevant. I understand that they cannot wear saris above the waist line while working in the mines, because it is too wrong.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is quite wrong.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: When do you expect to reimpose the ban ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : As soon as circumstances permit.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : What are the circumstances ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: They are not under my control nor am I able to anticipate them.

255

Casualties in Coal Mines

52. Mr. **Abdul Qaiyum** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) how many people were killed or wounded while working in coal mines in 1943 and 1944 ;

(b) whether the proposal of providing "Pit head baths " for women engaged in the mines and creaches for their children has been given effect to ; and

(a) if not, the reasons for the delay ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:

	Killed	Injured
(a) 1943 -	290	1,320
(b) 1944 -	332	1,395

(c) So far pit head baths have been provided only in the Digwardih Collieries; creaches have been installed in 7 collieries of Central Provinces and in one colliery of Raniganj (Bengal).

(d) The Government of India are not aware of the reasons for the delay. They have under active consideration the question of amending the Indian Mines Act to make it obligatory on the mine owners who employ women workers to maintain creches.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum : Will the Government see that these improvements are effected in good time before the ban on employment of women takes place ?

Otherwise, there will be no use for these improvements later on ? Will the Honourable Member see that they are not delayed too long ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Employment of women underground may be stopped but employment of women on the surface will continue. Creaches will be necessary. That does not mean that I am going to delay matters.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : How many of those cases reported killed, due to mining accidents, were women ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I want notice.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra : What percentage of these deaths was due to asphyxiation and what percentage was due to accidents.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I want notice.

256

Mineral Deposits in South India

61. **Mr. K. S. Gupta :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the different types of mineral deposits—metallic and non-metallic—found in South India as a result of the occasional survey done by the Geological Department during the past thirty years ?

(b) Is it a fact that deposits of magnetic iron ore are found in large quantities in easily accessible places ?

(c) Was there any attempt made by the Government of India to establish an iron and steel industry or encourage others to establish one in the vicinity of these deposits ? If not, why not ?

(d) Was there any systematic examination and investigation of the following deposits in the Madras Province (i) copper, (ii) zinc, (iii) lead, and (iv) aluminium? If so, what are the results ?

(e) Is it not a fact that ceramic articles of high quality could be manufactured in the Province of Madras if the resources are properly tapped ? Are there any investigations made with regard to this industry ? If not, why not ?

(f) Is it not a fact that Illuminate, an important mineral for manufacture of paint, could be found in some of the Southern districts ? Was there any scheme or attempt made to develop this industry ? If not, why not ?

(g) Is it not a fact that large quantities of mica, an irreplaceable mineral for high tension electrical work, is found in some of the coastal districts of the Madras Province ?

(h) Is it not a fact that mica is simply mined and exported to foreign countries without any attempt to start an industry for the preparation of electrical goods ?

(i) Do the Government of India propose to establish in Southern India a central research organisation to study these deposits ? If so, when ? If not, why not ?

(j) Is it not a fact that almost all the scientific research institutions started and to be started under the Bureau of Scientific and Industrial Research would be located in Northern India ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Metallic : Chromite, iron ores, ilmenite and Columbite-Tantalite.

Non-Metallic: Ceramic materials including Kaolin, Fireclay and other types of clays, quartz, felspar, and sillimanite. Coal Lignite, and Rare Earth Minerals including Monazite, Zircon and Samarskite.

(b) Yes.

(c) No. The ore is low grade and is not associated with suitable fuel for smelting.

(d) Yes. No deposits of economic value have however been discovered by the Geological Survey.

(e) Possibly. The Madras Government have given attention to this question and have employed Ceramic Experts.

The Geological Survey is conducting investigations on the quantity and quality of ceramic materials in Madras.

(f) First part. Yes. Second part. No, because the deposits in Travancore are much richer than those in Madras, and the demand for this mineral is limited.

(g) Yes.

(h) Yes, mica is largely exported.

(i) The Government of India have under consideration a scheme of expansion of the Geological Survey of India, both in personnel and in

activities; it is hoped that in future a much more intensive study of the mineral deposits in the country would be possible than is the case at present.

(j) The question should be addressed to the appropriate Member.

257

Damodar Canal and Polavaram Projects

65. Prof. N. G. Ranga : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) whether, in view of his references to the Tennessee Valley Authority as a model after which the Damodar Canal (Bengal) and Polavaram (Madras) projects are to be developed. Government would be pleased to get a brief report published about the general aspects of that scheme and its achievements ;

(b) whether, in view of the special need of Bengal for relief from floods, flood-relief will be accepted as the primary objective of the proposed Damodar project ; and

(c) whether, in view of the great need of scheduled classes (Harijans) of Bengal and Bihar for lands, the Government of India will take special steps to set aside adequate funds for obtaining large areas of lands for co-operative settlement and cultivation by the Harijans of Bengal and Bihar ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The Tennessee Valley Authority is a foreign Government organisation. A copy of the report on the working of the Authority will be obtained and placed in the library of the House.

(b) Yes ; flood-control will receive priority over other aspects of control measures.

(c) The problem of the best way of helping landless labourers is engaging the attention of Government.

258

Higher Prices Charged for Rice in Bihar Coalfields

72. Mr. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that, in spite of his reply to my starred question No. 611(b) on the 20th November, 1944, that the Bihar Government have decided to charge the total wholesale controlled rate plus four annas administrative charge and to bear the resulting loss, the Joint Pool at Jharia is continuing to charge the old rate from its members ?

(b) Is it a fact that some mine-owners have lodged protest with the Central Government on this question ? If so, what steps have been taken to redress their grievances ?

(c) Is it a fact that the General Manager of a large colliery in the Province of Bihar has been committed to the Court of Session by the Magistrate, Dhanbad, to stand his trial under Section 81 of the Defence of India Rules at the instance of the Rationing Officer, Dhanbad, for supply of rice to the miners

in excess of the prescribed ratio for the purpose of increasing the output of coal at his colliery ?

(d) Is it a fact that the Rationing Officer, Dhanbad, himself on behalf of the Bihar Government was charging and allowing the Joint Pool to charge higher rates over the declared controlled rates during the same period, as admitted by the Honourable Member in reply to my above question ?

(e) Will Government consider the desirability of taking necessary steps against the said Rationing Officer, Dhanbad, for violating the rules promulgated under the Ordinance, dated the 9th February, 1944, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Dhanbad, by charging higher rates than the controlled rates of rice ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b) The Bihar Government report that they have received no protest to this effect but I have received one and have asked the Bihar Government for a further report. The matter will be further considered on receipt of their report.

(c) Yes.

(d) Collieries were being charged in excess of control rates for foodgrains prior to November, 1944, under the orders of the Provincial Government.

(e) Does not arise in view of reply to part (d).

259

Purchasing of Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company

76. Mr. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to refer to his reply to my starred question No. 419 on the 15th November, 1944 and state whether any decision has been arrived at in regard to the question of the Government exercising their option to purchase the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company, Limited, on the expiry of their present licence ?

(b) If it has been decided to exercise this option, has the required notice been served on the Company ?

(c) In the event of the undertaking being taken over by Government, what will be the machinery for running it in future ?

(d) In case it has been decided not to exercise the aforesaid option, will the Honourable Member be pleased to make a detailed statement of the reasons for such decision ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). It is understood that the Chief Commissioner has decided to serve a notice on the Company of the intention of Government to exercise their option to purchase, but that the notice has not yet been served.

(c) No decision has yet been taken.

(d) Does not arise.

**Recent Racial and Religious Distinction set up by Labour
Department about Allotment of Quarters**

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The next notice of an adjournment motion is from Sir Syed Raza Ali to censure the Government of India for the racial and religious distinction recently set up by the Labour Department in the allotment of houses in favour of Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians by issuing Memorandum No. WII-4/114, dated 25th January, 1945.

I should like to know from the Member in charge what exactly the position is.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I have looked into the Memorandum and I am told that instead of the word " Indian " the word " Indian Christians " crept in through inadvertence. It will be corrected so that there will be no discrimination involved at all.

Sir Syed Raza Ali (Cities of the United Provinces : Muhammadan Urban) : I think the best thing would be for the Honourable Member to make a statement in this House and have the whole thing placed on record.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have corrected the Office Memorandum and it will be issued in the altered form.

Sir Syed Raza Ali : But the House would like to know something as to what is being talked about. What is the meaning of the Memorandum as it stands and what is the correction that my Honourable friend has made and what will be the effect of the correction.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Memorandum that was originally issued read as follows:

" This Department has had under consideration the question of the abolition of the distinction between ' Orthodox ' and ' Unorthodox ' types of quarters available in Delhi, New Delhi and Simla for allotment to officers drawing less than Rs. 600 per mensem. After considering the views of the Departments, it has been decided that the distinction should be abolished with effect from the next summer season.

In respect of Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians, in whose case the Estate Officer is satisfied that they profess European habits, the Estate Officer has been vested with discretion to allot residence with raised W. C. (unorthodox quarters) to them provided they are otherwise eligible for the particular category of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' type of accommodation."

Necessary amendments to the rules will be made in due course. That was the original Memorandum that was issued. The amended Memorandum makes this change.

"The Estate Officer has been vested with discretion to allot residences with raised W. C. (unorthodox quarters) to those officers, whether European, Anglo-Indian or Indian, in whose case he is satisfied that they profess

European habits, provided they are otherwise eligible for the particular categories of "A", "B", "C" and "D".

261

Ignoring Claims of Central Assembly Members for Accommodation in Western Court Rooms

156. Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) Whether certain rooms in the Western Court and other accommodation are primarily intended for the Honourable Members of the Central Assembly attending the Sessions or Select Committees.

(b) whether in allotting accommodation for the Select Committee on the Insurance Bill, the claims of the Members have been ignored and the Members of the National Defence Council have been given preference ; and, if so, why ; and

(c) whether due regard to the prior claims of the Members of the Central Legislative Assembly will be paid in future ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) 19 rooms in the Western Court and 69 quarters are reserved for the Honourable Members of the Indian Legislature during the sessions. During the non-Session periods, 7 rooms in the Western Court and 8 quarters are reserved for Members visiting Delhi in connection with the work of the Central Legislature.

(b) No; the rooms in the Western Court were allotted to the Members of the National Defence Council in the absence of any intimation of the meeting of the Select Committee on the Insurance Bill in January, 1945 or of any demand for accommodation from the Members. Arrangement was however made to accommodate the members of the Select Committee who asked for accommodation in the Western Court.

(c) Arrangement is always made to accommodate the Members of the Central Legislature provided timely notice is given.

262

Construction of a Road to Imperial Research Institute at Mukteswar

178. Mr. Badri Dutt Pande : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if there is a proposal to construct a cart or motor road to the Imperial Research Institute at Mukteswar in the Naini Tal district ?

(b) If so, what will be the length of the road and the cost of construction ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) There is no such proposal before this Government.

(b) Does not arise.

263

Examination of Commercial Aspects of Indian Spring-waters

308. Mr. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour member be pleased to refer to unstarred question No. 50 of the 5th August, 1943, and the

reply thereto, and make a statement indicating the results of the examination of the commercial aspects of Indian spring-waters, and the trial given thereto, the location of the different springs where trials have been made and the composition and properties of the respective waters ?

(b) Have Government any scheme for the working of any of these sources of spring-water through State agency or through the agency of any private enterprise ? If so, what are the details of such schemes ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). Waters of certain thermal mineral springs in Bihar were investigated by the Geological Survey of India and after examination of the chemical properties of these waters it was decided that there would be no advantage in Government undertaking during war time the commercial exploitation of these waters.

264

Damodar River Transport for Coal in Bengal

310. Mr. R. **R. Gupta :** Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware that in the last century a proposal was considered by the Government of India for providing river transport to the movement of coal from the Bengal coal fields to Calcutta by rendering the river Damodar as an all weather navigable channel ? If not, will Government consider the advisability of re-examining such a proposal in connection with the proposed multi-purpose Damodar River project ? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am not aware of any such proposal but there was a proposal to take out a canal from the Damodar river from Raniganj to Calcutta.

The enquiry now being made is examining the possibility of a multipurpose scheme for the control of the Damodar—this examination will extend to the possibilities of encouraging navigation.

265

Discovery of Petroleum Near Rawalpindi

314. Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the reports appearing in the newspapers about the discovery of petroleum near Rawalpindi and the Punjab ; and

(b) whether the monopoly for exploiting this petroleum has been given to a foreign concern ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes, Government have seen the reports referred to— (b) The matter is the concern of the Provincial Government and Government of India have no information.

266

Women Workers in Mills and Factories of Delhi Province

327. Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) the total number of women workers in the year, 1944, in the mills and factories in Delhi Province to which the Factories Act is applied;

(b) whether action under the Factories Act was taken against any of these concerns for failure to conform to the provisions of Acts for safeguarding the interests of women workers ; and

(c) whether a Women Labour Welfare Officer has been appointed for Delhi Province ; and, if so, what her duties are ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : With your permission. Sir, I propose to reply together to question Nos. 327 and 328. I have made enquiries and will lay a report on the table in due course.

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Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company

403. Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) whether he has completed the enquiry promised by him in his answer to Mr. Neogy's question No. 419 in the last session regarding the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company ;

(b) the profit the company is making; and

(c) the result of the enquiries, and whether Government propose exercising the option to purchase it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (c). The Honourable Member's attention is drawn to the reply given to Mr. K. C. Neogy's question on 9th February 1945.

(b)The dividend declared by the Company since 1939 has been as follows: 1939—11 per cent. }

1940—11 percent. }

1941—11 per cent. }- income tax free.

1942— 9 per cent. }

1943— 9 per cent. }—

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Have Government decided to take over the Company ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, Sir.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: When will it come into effect ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: As soon as the license ends.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : Has the notice been actually served as yet?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I believe so.

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Government Contribution to Indian Labour Federation

404. Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please slate :

(a) whether, in view of the fact that the President of the Trade Union Congress, Sri Jamnadas Mehta, has denied the fact of having received the amount from the Government as alleged by the Labour Member, he has investigated into the matter;

(b) whether the amount has been credited in the accounts of the Trade Union Congress ; and

(c) in whose hands the money is being given ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Honourable Member is apparently referring in this question to Indian Federation of Labour of which Mr. Mehta was the President and not to the All-India Trade Union Congress.

(a) I would refer the Honourable Member to my reply to Mr. Lalchand Navalrai's question No. 31 on the 2nd November, 1944. (b) I have no knowledge.

(c) The payment was originally made to the representatives of the Federation through the National War Front and later, through the Chairmen, National Service Labour Tribunals. From June 1944, the payment is made to the Secretary of the Federation.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Is it not necessary that Government should satisfy themselves that when money is sanctioned for a particular organisation it has been credited to the accounts of that organisation ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not my business to check the accounts of any organisation.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : In view of the Honourable Member's statement on a previous occasion that an auditor had been sent to audit the accounts may I know if the auditor's report has been received ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : My Honourable friend must put down a specific question on that point.

Mr. **Abdul Qaiyum** : Will the Honourable Member give the names of the office-bearers of the organisation who actually received the money ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : First of all it was paid through the National War Front; then a change was made and the money was paid through the Chairmen of the National Labour Service Tribunals; and from June, 1944 it is paid to the Secretary of the Federation.

Mr. **Abdul Qaiyum** : Will the Honourable Member give the name of the particular gentleman who received the money ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I shall require notice.

Mr. **T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar** : In view of the fact that the Public Accounts Committee for 1942-43 specifically said that no vouchers and no accounts are kept for this money given to Mr. Roy, may I know if the money was given to Mr. Roy in his personal name and whether audits were made and what conclusion the auditors came to as to whether the amounts were credited to the organisation ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot say to whom the money

was paid before the new arrangement was made. After the new arrangement was made the money is paid to the person who is known as Secretary.

Mr. Badri Dutt Pande : In view of the fact that the subsidy to the Labour Federation is not approved by this House, is it the intention of Government to discontinue it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not wish to anticipate the decision.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Has provision been made for it in the next Budget ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If my Honourable friend will wait he will know.

Mr. Sri Prakasa : Have Government made sure that the money is well spent ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes sir. I have no doubt about it.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Sir, may I point out to the Chair that this is an impertinent answer ? The Budget is coming up soon and he must know whether provision for this amount has been made. May I know whether this sum has been provided for ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : My Honourable friend will know it on the 28th February.

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Labour Exchange Bureaus

405. **Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state in how many places labour exchange bureaus have been established ?

(b) For what class of persons are these bureaus intended to serve ?

(c) Till now, for how many persons have they found employment ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Employment Exchanges have been established at ten centres in India, *viz.*, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Madras, Calcutta, Dhanbad, Cawnpore, Delhi, Lahore and Karachi.

(b) for the present, the Employment Exchanges are intended to serve technical personnel as defined under the National Service (Technical,) Personnel Ordinance, 1940 who are in receipt of wages of not less than Rs. 1-8-0 per day in the cities of Bombay and Calcutta and Re. 1 per day in other places.

(c) Upto 31st December, 1944 the Exchanges had found employment for 5,909 workmen.

I may add that it was only in December, 1943 that it was decided to set up these exchanges and considerable difficulty was experienced in securing competent staff and suitable accommodation.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : May I know whether Government propose to extend the work of these Labour Exchanges to other categories of labour ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, Sir.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : What are these other categories of labour which extension is proposed ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : We have come to no decision as yet.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum : May I know for what percentage of the total applicants jobs were found ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The total number of workmen that were registered as wanting jobs was 14,697 out of whom employment was found for 5,909 men.

Shrimati Radha Bai Subbarayan : Do these figures include women also?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : My figures do not make any distinction between male and female.

270

Arrangements for Care of Children of Women Miners

436. **Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) what the specific arrangements are for the care of infants and children of women miners working inside mines and on the surface in all mining areas, and under whose supervision these arrangements are carried out;

(b) the facilities provided for nursing mothers working inside mines to feed their infants at regular intervals ; and

(c) whether the arrangements referred to in (a) and (b) have been approved by any medical authority ; and, if so, by whom ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No specific arrangements have so far been made, but at a few mines crèches with female attendants have been provided and in some collieries child clinics exist where milk is distributed to miners' children. The question of requiring provision of crèches is at present under the consideration of Government.

(b) Children are not allowed underground and therefore no special facilities are required underground. Mothers are not allowed underground within one month of delivery. Information as to facilities allowed to other mothers to come up to feed their children is being called for.

(c) No.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I ask, Sir, if the Government will prohibit women from working underground in mines where these arrangements have not been made until Government consider this question ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have not followed the question.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Will Government take definite steps to have proper arrangements for the care of children and for enabling women to come up to the surface to feed their children ? Surely infants require to be fed even after they are a month old ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot arrive at a decision until I

know what is the magnitude of the problem. I have called for information.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : As the Honourable Member himself admits that the problem is a very serious one, will Government prohibit women from working underground till they have finished considering the problem ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not know whether there are any number of women who are suckling babies underground.

Mr. Manu Subedar : Will the Honourable Member discontinue the work of women underground in those mines where the crèches and other facilities mentioned by him do not exist.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am taking steps to see that every mine has got creches.

Mr. Manu Subedar : Will the Honourable Member discontinue the work of women until that time ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If that was the only alternative, that proposition might be considered.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : Will Government consult the All-India Medical Council in regard to part (c) of this question in regard to the advisability or otherwise of allowing mothers with suckling babies to work underground ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not know whether they will accept the responsibility of advising Government in this matter.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : I am asking whether Government will be willing to ask them, whether they are prepared to give advise or not.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not think this is a problem where consultation is necessary.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I ask if the International Labour Conference during its last session made certain suggestions with regard to this matter ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information at all at present with me.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : Is it a fact that these crèches in most mines only function effectively when visitors are conducted round and when Government Inspectors go round there on their pre-arranged visits and that miners' children who live in neighbouring areas are sometimes not permitted into the crèches and there are no adequate facilities in most of the mines for the care of infants or children, even where crèches exist in name with very few exceptions ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not know how the Honourable Member knows that there are no crèches when she does not go and visit.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: The Honourable Member had gone to the mining areas.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have also gone.

Steps for Enforcing Mines Maternity Benefits Act in Mining Areas

437. **Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) what steps Government have taken to enforce the provisions of the Mines Maternity Benefits Act in mining areas since women miners are illiterate and ignorant of their rights ;

(b) whether Government have any report about the application of this Act since it was passed in 1941 ;

(c) whether four week's absence before and after delivery of a child has not proved insufficient to give adequate relief to the women miners and avoid injury to their health; and

(d) whether Government have obtained medical opinion on the subject referred to in (c) ; and, if so, whether Government will place a copy of it on the table of the House; and, if not whether Government propose to take steps to secure such opinion ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) One Senior Labour Inspector and two Junior Labour Inspectors who are qualified doctors have been appointed, under the Chief Inspector of Mines in India.

(b) Although Government themselves have not received reports about the working of the Act, the Inspectors under the Chief Inspector of Mines submit reports to him regularly and suitable action is taken by the Department of Mines.

(c) and (d). The four-week period before and after delivery in respect of women is in line with similar provision under Factory legislation. The question of increasing the period before delivery in respect of women employed underground is under consideration.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : What about after delivery ? Will Government also consider the advisability of extending the period after delivery ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not necessary. There is complete prohibition on the employment of women who have delivered.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that since the ban on the employment of women underground was withdrawn, there have been cases in some mines of children being born underground.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : Will the Honourable Member kindly find out and take steps to see that such cases do not occur ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If the Honourable Member will refer me to specific cases, I shall certainly make inquiries.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : I am prepared to do so.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I ask for an assurance that Government will get the opinion of a competent medical authority on this important question, before they come to a decision on it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They will undoubtedly, if they find

it necessary.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Is it not a fact that the International Labour Conference during its last session suggested that the period before and after confinement should be about two months under the Maternity Benefits Act ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information. I do not recall that.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : I understand that it is mentioned in the report which the Government have circulated to us.

Mrs. Renuka Ray : Since the Honourable Member considers that he is justified in ignoring the International Convention prohibiting women working underground, I should like to know if he thinks it also unnecessary to consider the maternity benefits provision of the International Labour Conference ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : We are considering that matter.

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Abolition of Distinction between Orthodox and Un-Orthodox Quarters

451. Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons that led to the decision to abolish the distinction between " orthodox " and " un-orthodox " types of quarters as stated in the Labour Department Memorandum, dated the 25th January, 1945; and

(b) the effect of this decision on (i) the present occupants of such quarters and (ii) those who qualify for these quarters in the future ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) According to the allotment rules hitherto in force, applicants for accommodation had to apply either for the orthodox or the un-orthodox type of quarters and those who applied for one type of quarters were considered ineligible for the other type. In view of the present shortage of accommodation, the above rules very often worked to the disadvantage of the officers eligible for these types of accommodation, and produced the anomalous result that if an applicant failed to secure accommodation in the type he had applied for, he was obliged to go without any accommodation at all, even though he might have secured accommodation in the other type, had he applied specifically for that type.

Further, the maintenance of the distinction between the two types of quarters entailed extra work in the Estate Office in as much as the allotment of the two types of quarters had to be kept separate. Besides, it was also felt that the maintenance of the distinction between orthodox and un-orthodox quarters and their allotment on the basis of the orthodoxy or otherwise had become out of date.

(b) (i) None.

(ii) The decision of 25th January 1945 has since been slightly modified on

15th February 1945. Those who are eligible for the particular category of ' A', 'B', ' C ' and ' D ' type of accommodation will be eligible to apply for both types of quarters.

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Deaths of Women Workers in Mines

453. Mr. **K. S. Gupta** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the number of deaths of women workers in the mines of India (including coal) in the years of 1942, 1943 and 1944 due to (i) diseases, and (ii) accidents ?

(b) Is it not a fact that men workers are not available to work in coal mines as the wages offered are not commensurate with the rise in prices of foodstuffs and other necessaries of life ?

(c) Is there any attempt on the part of the mine owners or the Government of India to offer better wages and special amenities of life in the supply of foodstuffs and housing accommodation to mine workers to attract enough men workers to enable the Government to apply the ban on women working underground and thus save the dignity of womanhood in India as in every other civilised country ?

(d) Is it not a fact that infant mortality is very high in the mining areas due to lack of milk from the mother who is automatically getting dry due to hard and strenuous work underground ?

(e) Is it not a fact that no pure milk is available to the workers in the mining areas ?

(f) .Are any attempts made by the mine-owners or Government to supply milk free of cost to children at least below one year in the various mining areas ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The number of deaths of women in all mines in India due to accidents both on surface and underground for the years 1942, 1943 and 1944 were 9, 11 and 53 respectively. No figures of deaths due to diseases are available. (b) No.

(c) Yes. The following improvements in regard to wages, welfare and amenities have been introduced ;

(1) subsidisation of foodstuffs and the provision of grain shops ;

(2) improved health measures including malaria control and increased provision for construction of hospitals ;

(3) provision of an adequate range of consumer goods for purchase;

(4) provision of transport to and from work ;

(5) increase in the rates for coal raisings at Railway Collieries so as to enable the contractors to offer more attractive wages to labour; and

(6) an informal agreement between Government and the mine-owners for an increase in the wages of colliery labour.

(d) It cannot be said that infant mortality is very high in mining areas due to lack of milk. Infant mortality figure in the coalfields is less than the All-India

Figure.

(e) Pure milk is available in mining areas. Samples of milk are frequently taken and examined by the Inspectors employed by the Mines Boards of Health and action is taken when adulteration is discovered.

(f) No. Government are examining further possibilities in regard to improvement of health of women and children in mining areas.

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Women Workers Working Underground in Mines

454. Mr. **K. S. Gupta** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the number of women workers underground in the years 1942, 1943 and 1944 ?

(b) Is there any attempt made to reduce the number of women employed underground ? If not, why not ?

(c) Is it a fact that in certain coal mines women are allowed or compelled to work even in stages of advanced pregnancy, thus giving rise to child births underground ? Was any report to that effect brought to the notice of Government? If so, what is the action taken to put a stop to such a malpractice ?

(d) Would Government consider the question of applying a strict ban on women working underground as soon as the seventh month of pregnancy is complete ? If not, why not ?

(e) Are Government aware that maternity benefit offered to women workers is only nominal and that several complaints are made to their immediate superiors who do not care to report to the authorities concerned ?

(f) Does the Honourable Member propose to make an enquiry and remedy the defects ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) 1942—*Nil.*, 1943— about 7,000, 1944—16,000.

(b) Yes. Every effort is being made to expedite the bringing about of such conditions as would enable Government to re-impose the ban on the underground employment of women in coal mines. In other mines, the ban already exists.

(c) No. So far as I am aware no children have been born underground in mines. No such reports have ever been received. The last part of the question does not arise.

(d) A proposal on these lines is under the consideration of Government.

(e) There are one Senior Labour Inspector and two Junior Labour Inspectors working under the Chief Inspector of Mines to administer the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, and every effort is made to see that the requirements of this Act are complied with.

(f) No.

275

Scheme for Recruitment of Gorakhpur Labour for Employment in Coal Mines

464. Mr. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to explain in detail the scheme for the recruitment of Gorakhpur labour and its employment in the coal mines ?

(b) What is the total number of labourers so far recruited under this scheme ? What has been the total expenditure incurred therefor, and how much of it has been and is expected to be recovered from the collieries in which the labourers are employed or intended to be employed ?

(c) What rates of wages and what amenities are these labourers entitled to, and how do they compare with the average terms and conditions on which other labourers are engaged in the coal mines ? What reports, if any, have been received as regards their output of work and general efficiency as also aptitude for mining work from the different mines where they are employed ?

(d) What are the names of officers directly in charge of the working of the scheme, and what are their respective duties ? What are their qualifications and experience in the line, and what emoluments do they receive ?

(e) From what source is the requisite finance obtained initially ? Are the accounts relating to the scheme regularly audited under the control of the Auditor General ? Up to which period has audit of these accounts been completed ? Has any financial or accounts irregularity been brought to light as a result of audit of the accounts ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The labour is recruited by the Gorakhpur Labour Supply Depot in the United Provinces for employment on various Government works as well as in the coalfield. It is organised in gangs under the following supervisory staff:—

One sirdar for each gang of 50 men. One unit Supervisor for each contingent of 250 men. One camp Supervisor for each camp of 1,000 men. One Group Officer in charge of the personnel of one or more camps according to location.

The officer directly responsible for these labour camps is the Deputy Director, Labour Supply (Coal) with Headquarters at Dhanbad.

The labourers are recruited for six months or one year's service at work site or until no longer required, whichever is shorter. Each labourer is given a set of mazri clothing and blanket ; he is also given advances to meet initial expenses and provided free with accommodation, medical aid, cooking fuel and rations. He is remunerated for work done on specified scales of wages in addition to bonus for good work and long service.

(b) Total number of labourers so far recruited for work in mines 33,500. Present working strength 15,000.

Total expenditure incurred—Rs. 74,16,584 up to the end of January 1945.

Recoveries

Total amount billed for up to the middle of

January 1945..... 14 V, lakhs.

Actual recoveries 5 lakhs.

(c) Gorakhpur labour is entitled to the following wages and amenities when serving in colliery areas : Basic wage of 12 annas per day. Production Bonus of 4 annas per day. Extra allowance for working underground—4 annas per day. In addition the labour gets free foodstuffs for a complete diet, the estimated cost of which is about 14 annas per day. They are also entitled to free housing and free medical aid.

Labour from Gorakhpur gets on the whole better terms and conditions than total labour. Total colliery labour gets :

(i) as cash wages 50 per cent over the pre-war total rates of wages—the pre-war rates of wages were for an average worker about 8 annas in the case of surface workers and 14 annas in the case of those employed underground;

(ii) food concessions as follows : 1/2 seer of rice free for each day of attendance. Adequate supply of dal at concession rate of 6 seers to the rupee. Such further supplies of rice and dal as he may require at controlled rates.

The intention of the present concession rates is to supply full ration at concession rates for the miner himself and to require him to pay controlled rates for his family. These concessions were introduced in May last, but previously the concessions extended to the worker's family and were for rather larger quantities of grain. The worker is now given in lieu an additional cash allowance of two annas in the case of a bachelor and Five annas in the case of a married man with children.

Reports from various sources including colliery owners show that Gorakhpur labour is adaptable to most kinds of work such as building camps, removing over burden in quarrying schemes, loading coal into wagons as well as cutting coal. It is also reported to be regular in attendance, and under proper supervision, its output is as good as that of any other labour.

(d) (1) Mr. Walsh—Deputy Director, Labour Supply (Coal) Pay Rs. 1,925 per mensem.

(2) Mr. Morris—Assistant Director Coal (Production). Pay Rs. 1,215 per mensem.

Mr. Walsh is in complete charge of all matters relating to Gorakhpur labour including rations, pay, accommodation and welfare. He has 12 years' planting experience, was 3 years' Army Staff Officer in administrative capacity and was Labour Staff Officer at No. 3, Indian Reserve Base for 10 months where he was responsible for original organisation of Gorakhpur labour into Centralised force.

Mr. Morris is in charge of the labour on work sites, output of work, provision of tools and transport. He has handled labour of various classes during last 25 years in India and Burma. He raised and commanded Pioneer Battalion during past two years.

(e) The expenditure is initially debited to the head " Advance Repayable—Special Advances " while recoveries effected from the mine owners are credited to the receipt head " XXXVI—Miscellaneous Departments ". The difference between the expenditure incurred and the recoveries effected is recouped from the Coal Production Fund. The Audit Department is responsible for the audit of the expenditure. No audit or accounts irregularities have been brought to light so far.

276

Late Publication of Legislative Assembly and Council of State Debates (1944 Autumn Session)

13. Mr. Ananga Mohan **Dam** : Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state :

(a) the dates on which the Legislative Assembly and Council of State Debates for the Autumn Session (November), 1944, were made available for sale and for supply to the Honourable Members, respectively; and

(b) the reasons for the laic publication of those Debates ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The information is given in the statement attached.

(b) The delay in the publication of the debates was due to various causes, e.g., rush of operational war work, defective working of machines for want of replacement of spare parts and shortage of staff due to non-availability of suitable men.

277

Annual Reports of Supervisor of Railway Labour, Calcutta

532. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable the Labour Member to please state :

(a) whether the Supervisor of Railway Labour, Calcutta, has submitted to the Government his annual reports on the working of (i) the Payment of Wages Act, and (ii) the Hours of Employment Regulations subsequent to 1940-41 ; if so, whether these reports have been published in full or part and whether the Honourable Member will be pleased to lay copies thereof on the table of the House; and

(b) if the reply to the last portion of part (a) above is in the negative, whether the Honourable Member proposes to supply the following information in a tabular form for each Railway, separately, for the financial years 1941-42, 1942-43 and 1943-44 —

(i) the amount of fines inflicted on the Railway staff; (ii) the total number of cases in which fines were inflicted ;

(iii) the total number of irregularities detected in the working of the Payment of Wages Act ;

(iv) the total number of irregularities detected in the working of the Hours of Employment Regularities ;

(v) the nature of instruction issued to the various Railway Administrations

to avoid a repetition of such irregularities ;

(vi) the nature of representations made by the Labour Supervisor to the Labour Department of the Government of India on points where a conflict of opinion existed between the Supervisor and the Railway Administrations or the Board ; and

(vii) the decision given on points referred to in (vi) above ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Since the year 1940-41, annual reports on the working of the Payment of Wages Act and the Hours of Employment Regulations for the years 1941-42 and 1942-43 have been submitted by the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour. As I informed the Honourable Member in answer to his unstarred question No. 43 on the 10th February 1944, Government have decided not to publish these reports in view of the acute shortage of paper. They have, however, now decided to issue a press note in respect of the reports for the year 1942-43 as also in respect of future report until such time it is found possible to renew the previous practice of publishing them.

(b) Such information as is readily available is being compiled and a statement will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

278

Composition of Employees' Delegation to the Tripartite (Labour) Conferences

533. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Employees' Delegation to the Tripartite (Labour) Conferences or Standing Committee is composed of representatives of—

(i) the Indian Federation of Labour; (ii) the All-India Trade Union Congress ; and (iii) other workers;

(b) which industries and workers are included in category (iii) of "Other workers" and how their representatives are elected or nominated ;

(c) if the representatives of "other workers" are nominated by Government whether it is proposed to discontinue the practice ; if not, why not ; and

(d) on what basis and considerations Government nominate these delegates and whether the Provincial Governments have any hand in such nominations ; if so, to what extent ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b), (c) and (d). Category (iii) relates to labour interests not adequately represented on the two all-India labour organisations, viz., the All-India Trade Union Congress and the Indian Federation of Labour. The nominations are made by the Government of India after taking into consideration suggestions received from Provincial Governments. It is not the intention to discontinue the practice at least for the time being. Such nomination is necessary at the present stage of development of workers' organisations in the country.

Hydro-Electric Schemes

539. Mr. Manu Subedar : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state how many hydro-electric schemes are at present functioning in India ?

(b) What is the amount of power generated by each of them ?

(c) How much of this power is used for industrial purposes ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) 34 excluding private, industrial and military installations.

(b) It is not possible to give information about individual stations. The total energy generated by all the stations is approximately 1983 million K.W.H.

(c) About 56 per cent.

Hydro-Electric Schemes

540. Mr. Manu **Subedar:** (a) Will the Labour Member please state how many other hydro-electric schemes have been considered ?

(b) How many of them are going to be dealt with by (i) the Government of India, (ii) the Provincial Governments, and (iii) the Indian States ?

(c) What will be the total horse-power of these schemes ?

(d) How many of them have been already sanctioned by the Government of India ?

(e) For how many of them is machinery either under negotiation or under order?

(f) What is the approximate date when they are expected to function and make power available ?

(g) Which of these schemes will be the first ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) A large number of schemes have recently been considered ; several of them are in various stages of investigation. Plant requirements for 31 have so far been notified to the Secretary of State.

(b) (i) Under the present constitution, development of Hydro Electric Schemes falls within the purview of the Provincial Governments. The Government of India are, however, rendering them such assistance as is asked for through the Central Technical Power Board which they have recently set up for the initiation, co-ordination and pushing forward of electricity development schemes.

(ii) and (iii). Of the 31 schemes mentioned in reply to part (a), 14 are being dealt with by Provincial Governments, 13 by Indian States and 4 by private concerns.

(c) Approximately 6,70,000.

(d) 28 schemes requiring plant before the end of 1947 have so far been approved by the authorities concerned.

(e) Seven.

(f) Between the end of 1946 and 1949.

(g) The Mohammadpur Hydro Electric Schemes of the U. P. Government will probably be the first to start functioning out of postwar schemes.

Mr. Manu Subedar : Is it a fact that the Government of India are unduly strict with regard to hydro-electric projects which are submitted to them from the Provinces and from the States ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not suppose there is any ground for believing that they are more strict than the necessities of the case require.

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